

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

# THE ISLAMIC SUNRISE

Exponent of the 'non-secular' Islam postulated by the Lahore Ahmadiyya  
Muslim Movement for the benefit of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

An Official Organ of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore Ltd. ///



Maulana Kemal Hydal [Guest Speaker], Prof. Barrock & Pastor Brandford. 2009 Interfaith Conference, October 18, 2009.

"O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you... H. Qur'an 49:13.

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## **Feature Presentations:**

- **Reclaiming ISLAM: Exposing the Untruths of EXTREMIST Propaganda**, p -5-
- **Defamation in the Name of CHRIST re the Caner Bros.**, p -14-

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## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

• **ABRAHAM and the Sacrifice of the Animal Within, page -3-**

• **Reclaiming Islam, p- 5-**

•

• **Defamation in the Name of Christ, p-14-**

•

• **Functional Operational Beliefs of Muslims of the Lahore Section, p -16-**

## **SUFI EDIFICATION, p -21-**

• **Letter to Pakistan TV Channel, p- 28-**

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## **THE ISLAMIC SUNRISE shall:**

- Continue to propagate emphatically and uncompromisingly that "**THERE IS NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION**". Everyone is free to leave or embrace Islam as he or she wishes.
  - Present an unbiased attempt to eradicate the false doctrines that have crept into Islam over the past centuries.

### **MORE SPECIFICALLY, it shall:**

- Attempt to eradicate misconceptions regarding **JHAAD** that, particularly, it does **NOT** mean "**HOLY WAR**". The **Lahore AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN** has been propagating, **for over a hundred years now**, that "**the ink of the scholar is greater than the blood of the martyr.**" **Violence has no place in the Religion of Islam.**
- Continue to express total dissatisfaction with the "Ulema, and others such as the Qadianis condemning **MUSLIMS** as "**Kaafirs**", "**Infidels**", "**Heretics**", "**Apostates**". Only GOD can excommunicate a Muslim from Islam; no one has been bestowed with such authority.
- Continue to advocate our full commitment to the **FINALITY** of Prophet of Muhammad [p.b.u.h.]

**WE ADVOCATE THAT ANYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT JESUS WILL RETURN IN THE FLESH IS TAMPERING WITH THE FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD.**

- Explain that the name **AHMADI-yya** was adopted-100-Years ago after one of the Holy Prophet's names "**AHMAD**" in the Holy Qur'an [61:6].
- Forthrightly express that we are **NOT** a **SECT**: We believe in a **Universal, Loving, and Liberal Islam**, and a **Living God – who speaks now as HE did in the past.**
- Continue to educate the Muslims in general that the **Lahore Section of Muslims** is quite a different body of Muslims from the **Qadianis**.
- Clarify the misconceptions the 'Ulema and others have been propagating against the Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam.

**Learn more on pp. -16, 31, 32.**

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# ABRAHAM and the SACRIFICE of the Animal Within:- Dr. Muhammad Ahmad

*[This article was presented at the symposium on "The Faith of Abraham" held in conjunction with the USA Jamaat's 2007 annual convention. In this article, Dr. Ahmad emphasizes that the true sacrifice of Abraham was his unwavering adherence to the Unity of God. This sacrifice, Dr. Ahmad explains, is an internal struggle with one's own base desires. In the lives of Abraham, Lady Hajira and Ishmael, Dr. Ahmad continues, we are provided examples of how this process of true belief in One God through sacrifice may be achieved.]*

We find in the person of Abraham, a unique individual who shares the respect of major world religions. The Old Testament speaks of Abraham, "...and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things." (Genesis 24:1). His rise to such eminence was because, "... Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My Laws." (Genesis, 26:5).

In John 39, Jesus is quoted as saying... "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Speaking of Abraham, the Holy Qur'aan states: And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands he fulfilled them He said: Surely I will make thee a leader of men. ...When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds. (2:124, 131)

Hindu religious tradition also relates the story of Brahma, according to which, no being in the three worlds will worship him. He is also called son of god, and is often depicted with a white beard, reciting one of the four Vedas. One of his hands is shown holding a spoon, which is associated with the pouring of holy *ghee* (oil) into a sacrificial pyre-indicating the fact that Brahma is the lord of sacrifices. Brahma's vehicle is a divine swan. This divine bird is bestowed with the ability to separate milk and water from a mixture of the two. Also, this virtue indicates that one should learn to separate the good from the evil and then accept that which is valuable and discard that which is worthless or evil. From this symbolic language emerges a patriarchal human figure blessed with the revealed word, whose spirit soared to higher elevations like a bird, who could tell right from wrong (correlating with the Arabic word "*hanif*") and who is not worshipped as a god, but is close to God, and is connected

with the institution of sacrifice. This is very much a portrait of Abraham.

**Faith of Abraham:** belief in Divine Unity  
With reference to Prophet Abraham and Prophet Muhammad, the Holy Qur'aan states: Say: As for me, my Lord has guided me to the right path – a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of the polytheists. Say: My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (6:161, 162)

The faith of Abraham, based on the belief in the Oneness of God, is also presented in the Holy Qur'aan as a point of consensus between all revealed religions:

Say: O people of the Book, come to an equitable word between us and you, that we shall serve none but God and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides God, but if they turn away, then say: Bear witness, we are those who submit. (Ch.3:64)

Accordingly, Islam invites all humanity to the basic doctrine of Unity of God in its simplest form, what is also referred to as the *faith of Abraham*. As revealed from the above-quoted verse, the following are examples of associations with God which detract from a firm belief in the Unity of God:

1. Worshipping others than God and addressing prayers to them.
2. Ascribing Divine attributes to others.
3. Taking others as Lords besides God by rendering perfect obedience them which is due to God alone.

A fourth form of association with God is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur'aan, "Hast

*thou seen him who takes his low desires for his God?....."(Ch25: 43). Here, blind submission to one's own desires is described as a form of association with God. In order to uphold the principle of Divine unity, one has to sacrifice all else. For example we have love for different things in this world, in variable amount or degree, and for the love of one we are willing to sacrifice the other. Thus we love wealth but we are willing to sacrifice it for our health and well being. Those who love their honor and country maybe ready to sacrifice their life for it. Perfection of love in the Supreme Being thus requires the sacrifice of our material yearnings. The object of such degree of sacrifice also entails that it should be One and Only. Simply stated love of God in its perfect manifestation requires sacrifice of all our other loves and desires. This sacrifice does not require giving up one's desires, but rather controlling them.*

### **The history of "sacrifice":**

Study of various nations shows us that human sacrifice in some form or other was either a part of their ritual practice, or a principle of faith. Burning was often the mode of sacrifice to celestial deities. In ancient Greece the generic term for sacrifice (*thyria*) was derived from a root meaning to burn or to smoke.

**For the Babylonians, also, fire was essential to sacrifice,** and all oblations were conveyed to the gods by the fire god Girru-Nusku, whose presence as intermediary between the gods and men was indispensable. In the Vedic cult the god of fire, Agni, received the offerings of men and brought them in the presence of the gods. We find the ritual of the burnt offering in the Judaic tradition and sacrifice of the son in Christianity.

**The Holy Qur'aan tells us that the people of Abraham worshipped the sun, stars and various other deities.** When faced with Abraham's arguments for the Unity of God and his actions to prove the helplessness of their deities, which they found insulting, the people of Abraham decided to sacrifice him as an appeasement to their gods. The Holy Qur'aan states:

*They said: Build for him a building, then cast him into the flaming fire. And they designed a plan against him, but we brought them low. And he said: Surely I flee to my Lord - He will guide me. My lord, grant me a doer of good deeds. So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. But when he became of age to work with him, he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee: so consider what thou seest. He said:*

*O my father, do as thou art commanded: If God please, thou wilt find me patient. So when they both submitted and he had thrown him down upon his forehead. And We called out to him saying, Abraham. Thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision. Thus do We reward the doers of good. Surely this is a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. (Ch.37: 97-107)*

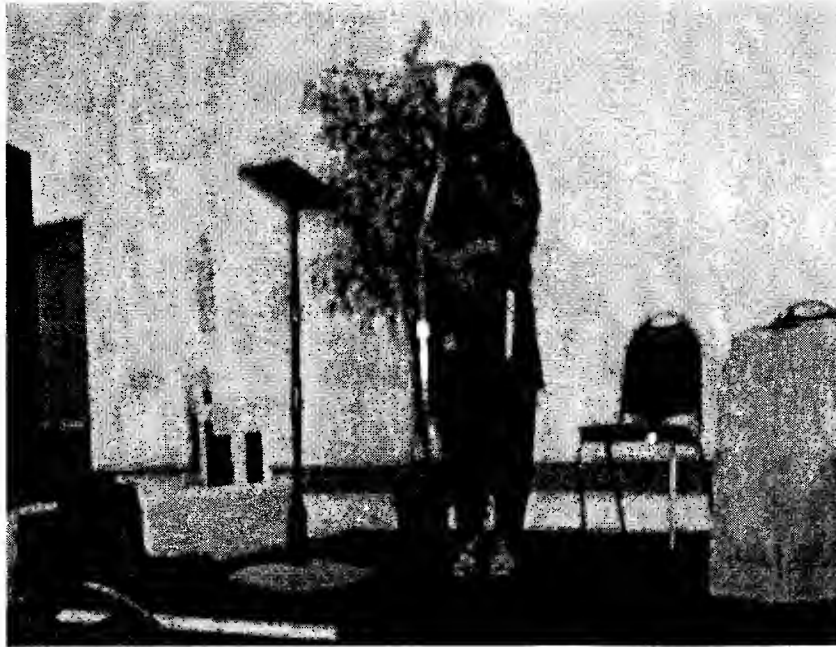
**In order to understand the meaning of Abrahamic sacrifice,** we must ask ourselves the following questions. What was the purpose of Abraham's sacrifice? Why did God put him, his wife and son through this?

- *What did he sacrifice?*
- *How did he evolve spiritually from this trial? What was its importance for generations to come?*
- *What was the role of Ishmael and Lady Hager?*
- *How does it apply to us today?*

**To answer these questions we must understand the first attribute of God mentioned in the Holy Qur'aan.**

**God is *Rabbilalameen*.** This implies that He is the Only, Creator, Sustainer, Nurturer and Evolver of all Creation from its lowest to its highest stage of development. In case of man, this involves both our physical and spiritual development and is universal for all of mankind. Thus, God by His very nature wants to evolve us both physically and spiritually.

***Continued on page -25-***



*Fariya Edoe at the Interfaith Conference. October 18, 2009*

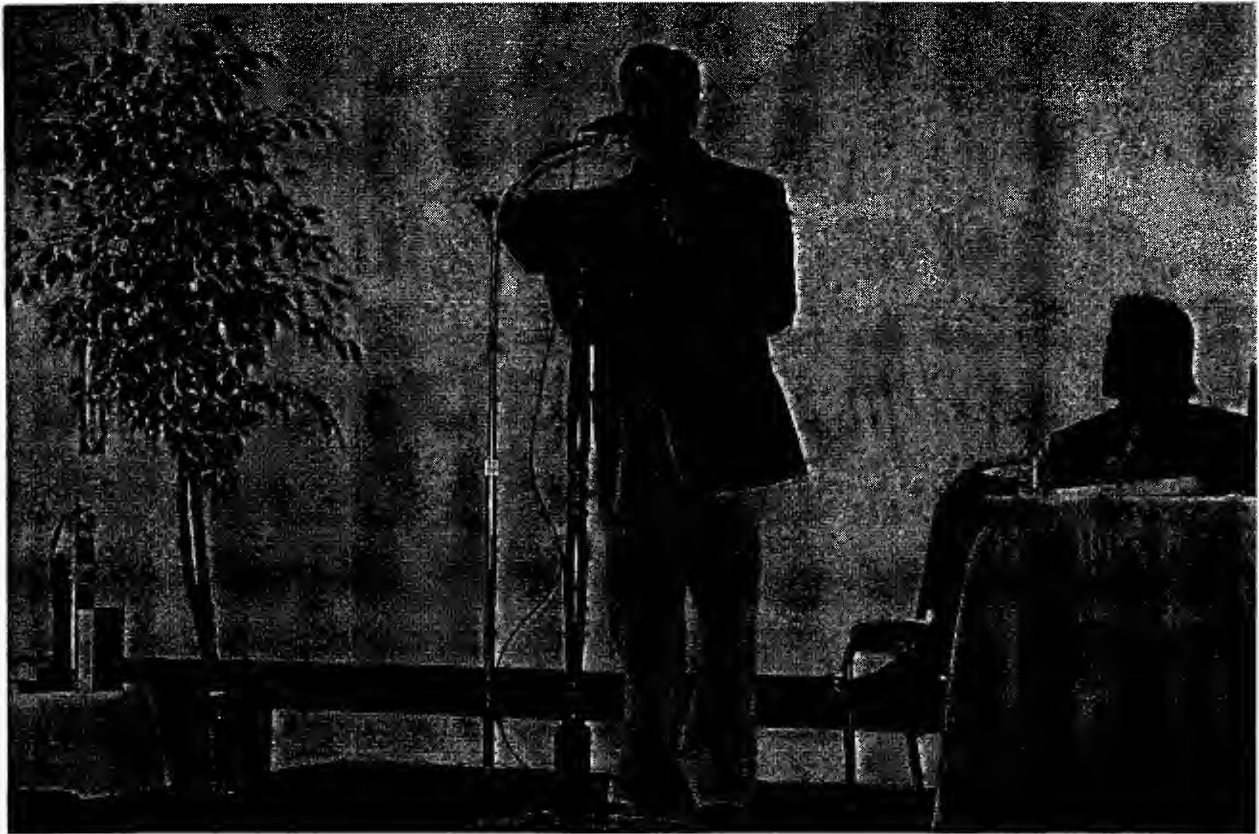
# **Reclaiming Islam:** Exposing the Untruths of Extremist Propaganda, Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

*[This article is based on a presentation given at the Faculty Club of the Ohio State University as part of the Torch Club lecture series. The Torch Club is a national civic organization in which professionals from the community – university professors, attorneys, judges, etc. – meet in fellowship once a month for the purpose of learning from one another. In the presentation, the Editor addresses the reality of Islam being perceived in the West as a violent and intolerant faith, far from a religion of peace. He explains this view is primarily the result of the violent acts and widespread propaganda by extremists, who claim that Islam is the source of their beliefs and agendas. The Editor proves the invalidity of these claims using the extremists' views on jihad, apostasy and democracy as illustrations.]*

## **Introduction**

The title of my presentation this evening is "Reclaiming Islam: Exposing the Untruths of Extremist propaganda". The word "Islam" is derived from the Arabic word "silm", meaning "peace". It is neither named after the religion's founder nor the place from which it originated as is the case with other faiths, but rather is titled after the objective to which it aspires. The attainment of peace – within the individual, amongst people, and between man and God – is the lofty goal Islam prescribes as the very purpose of life. Today, however, far from a religion of peace, *Islam is perceived in the West as a violent and intolerant faith that is incompatible with the civil, democratic ideals accepted by the modern world. found that a full third of Americans — 33% — believe mainstream Islam encourages violence against non-Muslims.*<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt, this view is primarily sustained due to the violent acts and widespread propaganda of extremists who profess that it is a strict adherence to the principles of Islam that justifies their beliefs and agendas.

Is there any legitimacy to the extremists' rationale? Can the primary sources of Islam be reasonably interpreted in a manner supporting their violent acts and crude convictions? Are the so-called "moderate" Muslims of today the real distorters of the Islamic faith, having strayed from the religion taught by the Prophet Muhammad and practiced by the early Muslims? Answering these questions does more than merely distinguish between good Muslims and bad Muslims. In fact, affirmatively resolving this issue can offer the most vital ammunition in the global war on terror by defeating extremists at their very core. And what do I mean by this? Recently the *National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terrorism* identified **ideology** as the "center of gravity" of Islamic extremist groups, like Al Qaeda.<sup>2</sup> Commenting on this noteworthy finding, Dale Eikmeier of the US Army War College's Center for Strategic Leadership states: The identification of an ideology [by the NMSP-WOT] as the center of gravity rather than an individual or group is a significant shift from a "capture and kill" philosophy to a strategy focused on defeating the root cause of terrorism.



**Attorney Fazeel S. Khan at the 2009 Interfaith Conference**

Accordingly, the plan's principal focus is on attacking and countering an ideology that fuels Islamic terrorism.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is recognized that defeating terrorism entails attacking the ideology upon which terrorists' base their causes. Unfortunately, the plan neither identifies the ideology, other than simply labeling it "extremist", nor does it provide any guidance as to how the ideology is to be combated. My objective this evening is to fill this void. I'll identify three common extremist views and prove their illegitimacy from the most authoritative sources of Islam.

### **What is Islam?**

In order to appreciate how erroneous the views of extremists' are, a basic understanding of what the religion of Islam actually entails is required. So I'd like to spend the first few minutes providing a brief sketch, a crash course if you will, on what Islam is. Islam is a **monotheistic faith** in the purest sense of the term. It teaches there is only One God, Who has no associate or companion. The Quran, the Holy Scripture of Islam, acknowledges Abraham as the archetype of this monotheistic faith. Abraham is repeatedly pointed out as comprehending that the True, Supreme, All-Powerful, Perfect God is One, and that it is to this One God that man is to submit himself completely. And it is this Abrahamic model of faith that Islam endeavors to reestablish:

***God speaks the truth; so follow the religion of Abraham, the upright one. And he (Abraham) was not one of the polytheists (3:95).***

***And who is better in religion than he who submits himself entirely to God while doing good (to others) and follows the faith of Abraham, the upright one? And God took Abraham for a friend (4:125).***

*As for me, my Lord has guided me to the right path — a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he (Abraham) was not of the polytheists (6:161). In Islam, God is also understood as that "Being possessing all the perfect attributes". In the first Chapter of the Quran, titled "The Opening", the chief attributes of God are introduced. We are told that He is "Rabb", which means He is not only the Creator, but also the Provider and Nourisher for all. We are told that He is "Rahman", which means He is All-Beneficent in that He has so much love for His creation that He provides his blessings to all, no matter how unmerited or undeserved. We are told that He is "Raheem", which means He is All-Merciful in that He rewards the doing of good abundantly, manifold times over. And we are told He is "Malik", which means He is the True Master of Judgment in that His punishment is always for reformation of the individual and never on account of anger for wrongdoing.*



Muhammad, on the other hand, is regarded as only one of the prophets of God, a mortal and in no way himself divine. In fact, a Muslim must not only believe in the prophethood of Muhammad, but in all the prophets and messengers of God:

*We believe in God and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them ... (2:136)*

The only difference between Muhammad and the other prophets is that Muhammad is uniquely referred to in the Quran as "*khatam-an nabiyyin*", meaning the "seal of the prophets": *Muhamad is not the father of any of your men (i.e. he has no sons to be his heir), but he is the Messenger of God and the Seal of the Prophets ... (33:40).*

What this title refers to is the "scope" of Prophet Muhammad's mission. According to Islam, the prophets and messengers before him were each given teachings for their respective nations and for the specific conditions the people of those nations faced at the time. Muhammad, Muslims believe, is the last of the prophets, who was revealed the final and complete message from God, a message for all nations and all times: *Say (Muhammad): O Mankind, surely I am the Messenger of God to you all (7:158) And We have not sent thee (Muhammad) but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind (34:28).*

As I have already mentioned, Islam is derived from the Arabic word "silm", meaning "peace", and the attainment of peace is the defining characteristic of the faith: *O you who believe, enter into complete peace. (2:208)*

**What I have just presented** before you are the fundamentals of Islam. Despite these fundamentals, extremists would have us believe that Islam, the faith founded on the principles of peace, spirituality, and the doing of good to others, advocates violence, intolerance, and domination of others. Common sense alone dictates the rejection of such a supposition. Islam is certainly not the *raison*

*d'etre* for extremists' beliefs and agendas. Take for example the Palestinian groups. Certainly the struggle against Israeli occupation is their paramount concern, clearly a more nationalistic than religious motivation. With Egyptian groups, the focus is primarily on internal governance of the country. For Pakistani groups, the motivation is overwhelmingly based on a desire to control

*And God invites to the abode of peace. (10:25)*

And how is this peace to be achieved? Well, the Quran states that the human "soul" is the "**spirit of God**" breathed into man:

*Then He (God) made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit, and gave you ears and eyes and hearts. (32:9)*

**The spirit of God within man is indicative of the divine** attributes existing within the individual. And it is through the doing of good works only that these attributes may be developed. Thus, in Islam, religion is not treated as a dogma which man must accept to escape punishment in the hereafter. Rather, the primary concern is with this life, not the next; that man, through a righteous life here on earth, may attain closeness to God:

*It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but righteous is the one who believes in God, and the Day of Reckoning, and the angels and the scriptures and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him (God) to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in the time of conflict. These are they who are truthful, and these are they who keep their duty. (2:177)*

**This is salvation in Islam! Heaven is a spiritual state** in which one attains closeness to God by developing the divine attributes within him through the doing of good works. The Holy Quran refers to the person who has achieved this state of total peace and contentment as the "**soul at rest**":

*O soul that art at rest, Return to your Lord, well pleased, well pleasing, So enter among My servants, And enter My Garden. (89:27-30)*

Kashmir. For Chechan groups, independence from Russia is the basis of their conflict. Clearly, Islam is a mere pretext for the extremists' geopolitical grievances and ambitions.<sup>4</sup> And this point is made even clearer when we assess the merits of specific extremist views. So, let's take a look at them.

**continued on p -8-**



**Pandit Ramsurat Maharaj Sister Fariya Edoos and Nick Lloyd at the 2009 Interfaith Conference**

**continued from p -7-**

## **EXTREMIST VIEW #1 – RE: JIHAD**

Extremists believe that *Jihad* is a religious duty that involves engaging in a “holy war” with non-Muslims for the purpose of spreading Islam throughout the world. In order to judge the validity of this view, the definition of “**Jihad**” must first be understood. The Arabic word “*jihad*” means “**striving hard**”. It implies an exertion on one’s part to the best of his or her ability for the purpose of improving something.

Accordingly, a laborer working hard to support his or her family is a “*jihad*”. A father or mother working hard to raise their children properly is a “*jihad*”. A student working hard to earn a degree for the purpose of contributing to society in a positive way is a “*jihad*”.

The Quran mentions 4 ways specifically that a Muslim should “strive hard”: *It recognizes the need to strive hard to attain nearness to God by leading a righteous life: “Those who strive hard towards Us, We certainly guide them in Our ways. And God is surely with the doers of good”. (29:69)*

It recognizes the need to strive hard to remain true to Islam under difficult and trying circumstances, such as when being persecuted because of one’s faith: *“To those who flee after they are persecuted, then strive hard and are patient, surely your Lord after that is Protecting, Merciful”. (16:110)*

It recognizes the need to strive hard to present the truths, the evidences and the beauty of the Quran to those unaware or disproving of it: **“Strive hard against them (non-Muslims) a mighty striving with it (Quran)”**. (25:52) In Islam, Muslims are not to shy away from engaging in discourse about their faith and debating the merits of their beliefs. But this is to be done in the most civil manner possible: “Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and debate with people in the best manner”. (16:125)

It is quite apparent that these first three forms of “*jihad*” stipulated in the Quran reveal that the term is used to connote being aligned with the



truth: that is, being true to one's self, by improving one's moral condition, being true to God by not denying His message under pressure and presenting the truth to others by way of civil discourse. It is in this general sense of the term that Prophet Muhammad declared: "The most excellent jihad is to say a word of *truth* before an unjust ruler".<sup>5</sup>

Now, there is a fourth way in which the Quran states Muslims should "strive". It recognizes the need to strive hard with property and lives to defend the Muslim community at times of war: "***Go forth, light and heavy, and strive hard in God's way with your wealth and your lives***" (9:41).

Obviously, it is this fourth form of jihad that extremists exploit for their political purposes. What is the context in which this verse is to be interpreted?

Surely, one would expect it to bear some affinity to the general manner in which the other forms of jihad are used; that is, to stand for the truth by exerting one's efforts to improve a condition. And that is exactly how it was applied by Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims.

Every student of Islamic history knows Prophet Muhammad and his companions were subjected to the severest forms of persecution in Mecca from the faith's inception. But they bore it all with patience, a form of jihad as mentioned earlier. Over a hundred of them had to

flee for their lives to Abyssinia, but persecution persisted. Ultimately, the entire Muslim population left their homes in Mecca and took refuge in Medina. Even this did not stop the hostilities against them; the Meccans were intent on exterminating this new religion that sought to empower the weaker members of society – the poor, the orphans, women and the elderly – which was an obvious threat to their hegemony. It was at this juncture only, in defense of the existence of their faith, the Quran permitted the Muslims to fight back:

***Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed.*** (22:39)

**It is axiomatic that taking up arms** was the last available option. It was out of sheer necessity, only in the case of defending themselves from "**oppression**" that it was permitted for Muslims to fight.

Now, extremists may claim that there are examples of Muslims being oppressed around the world and this warrants engaging in war. The Muslims in Palestine under Israeli occupation is routinely pointed out as an example. However, the very verse after the one quoted above goes on to explain what exactly is meant by "oppression". It further clarifies: Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say:

***Our Lord is God. And if God did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and***

***churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which God's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down.*** (22:40)

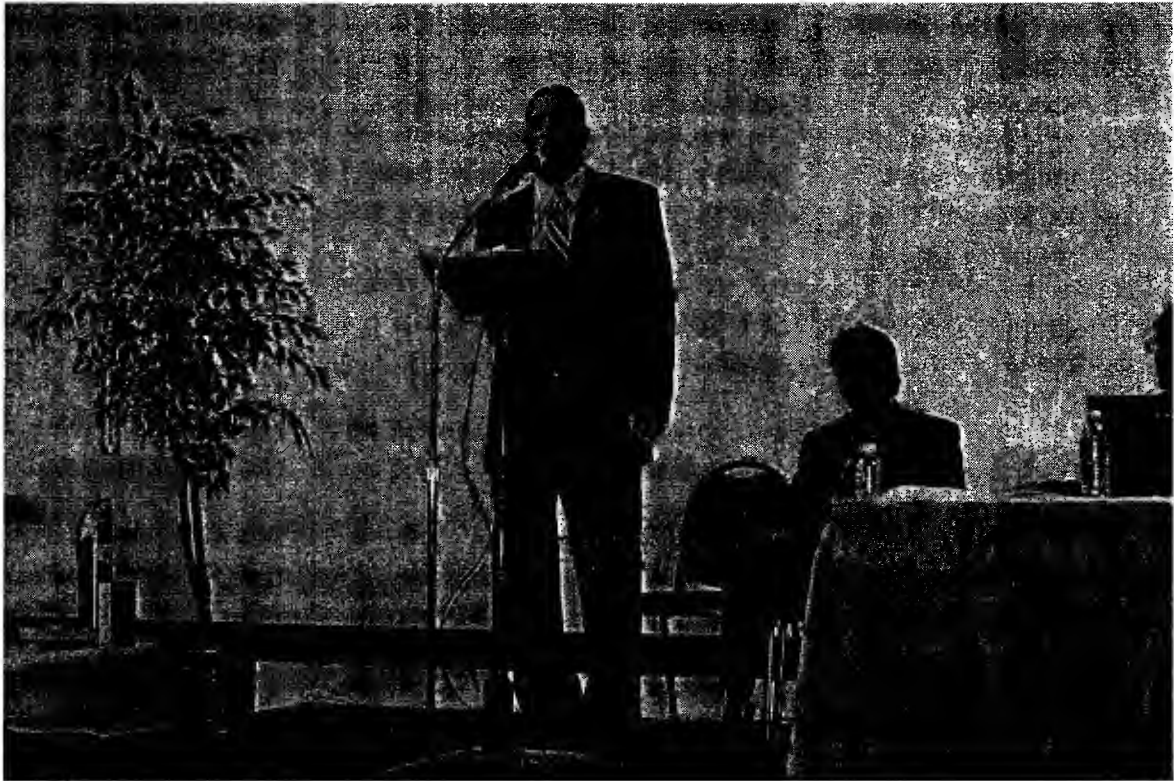
Thus, the permission to fight is conditioned upon facing "oppression" in terms of one's religious rights being denied. It is to safeguard religious freedom for all, to protect churches, synagogues and mosques, that warrants fighting in Islam. There is not the slightest basis for the view that fighting may be engaged in to compel anyone to accept to Islam or to expand the territory of the Islamic nation.

The Holy Quran is explicit about the "**defensive nature**" of war:

*And fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but be not aggressive. Surely God does not love the aggressors.* (2:190) Moreover, if aggression ceases and the enemy offers peace, it is obligatory upon Muslims to accept it and halt all warfare: *And if they incline to peace, you must also incline to it, and trust in God ...* (8:61)

The concept of a "**just war**", a concept unanimously understood, accepted and applied in the modern, civilized world, has never so clearly been defined in any religious scripture. The unconditional, aggressive view of war for the purpose of advancement of the Muslim territory, clearly, has no basis whatsoever in Islamic sources.

**continued on p -10-**



***PASTOR John Brandford at the 2009 Interfaith Conference***

***continued from p -9-***

## **EXTREMIST VIEW #2 – RE: APOSTASY**

Just as in the case with the extremist view on jihad, the extremist view on apostasy is completely without merit. It is held by extremists that an apostate, one who rejects Islam after having accepted it, is subject to the death penalty. Unfortunately, this view is widely propagated, so much so that the issue has been raised in western media as of late, regarding how the Muslim world would receive Barack Obama should he become President since he may have been a Muslim in his early childhood but is now a self-professed Christian and, therefore, may be considered an apostate and be subject to the death penalty.

This particular extremist view flies in the face of one of the greatest contributions Islam has made to the world; that is, establishing the basis for complete **religious freedom**. The Quran, a book revealed in the 6th century, laid down the *magna charta* of religious liberty by declaring:

**There is no compulsion in religion. (2:256)**

Religion is stated to be a personal matter, not something that can be forced upon anyone. The Quran explains this further by stating:

***The Truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve. (18:29)***

In fact, the Quran explains that God has provided man with “**free will**”, and accordingly, it is only natural that not everyone will believe, and suggests that “forcing” one to believe is going against God’s law: ***And if your Lord had pleased, all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them. Will you then force them till they are believers? (10:99)***

So from where did the belief that apostates must be put to death arise? Extremists exploit the fact that there are records of some persons who left the Muslim community and who happened to be killed at a later time. But the question is: were any of these individuals killed simply because they were apostates? Nowhere in the Quran is it mentioned that an apostate is to be put the death. Actually, it sanctions no punishment at all in this life as it states such persons will be held to account in the hereafter only. It is inconceivable that these particular persons were killed simply because they were apostates, as the Quran, some of the verses of which I relayed earlier, advocates complete freedom in matters of faith. Extremists, however, overlook the fact that when an apostate happened to be killed it was always when such person joined enemy forces at times of war. Thus, when an apostate happened to be killed it was not because he left Islam, but because he was an “**enemy combatant**”.

In fact, the Quran expressly states that those who leave Islam and are peaceful towards the Muslims, no harm should be brought against them: ***So if they withdraw from you and do not fight you, and offer you peace, then God allows you know way against them ... (4:90)***

Clearly, it was the "treasonous" acts of certain apostates that led to their deaths, not the fact that they chose to leave Islam. The intolerant, hostile view that apostates are to be put to death, has not basis whatsoever in Islamic sources.

### **EXTREMIST VIEW #3 – DEMOCRACY**

As in the case with the extremists' view on jihad and apostasy, the extremist view that Islam and democracy

are incompatible is wholly unfounded. Far from it, a study of the Quran and an examination of the practices of the early Muslims reveal that not only are the principles of governance in Islam compatible with "democratic" values, Islam is the very religion of democracy. In fact, it is clearly a departure from the Islamic principles of governance that is the primary cause of the creation of autocratic regimes in the Muslim world.

A general consensus may be reached in defining democracy, in simple terms, as a system of governance wherein: 1) majority opinion is accepted, and 2) individual rights are protected. Both these criteria find explicit support in the Quran.



***Maulana Kemal Hydal[Our Guest Speaker], Prof. Barrock and Pastor Brandford***

### **MAJORITY RULE**

For instance, the essence of "majority rule" is openly declared in the Quran in the following verse:

*And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and whose affairs are decided by counsel among themselves ... (42:38)*

In this verse we find the foundation for a **government by counsel**, or a **parliamentary government**.

Clearly, in Islam, the people are not to be ruled by the whim of one person, but rather are to be

consulted, or have their representatives consulted, as to how the affairs of public life are to be conducted. This principle was put into practice by no other than Muhammad himself. Recorded history bears witness to him not only engaging in

consultative processes with regard to administrative matters and state affairs, but also accepting the majority view despite his personal opinion at times being to the contrary. In fact, Muhammad was expressly commanded to **"consult them in important matters"** (3:158).

Furthermore, the Quran encourages the "majority rule" style government by laying the foundation for a **"participatory system"**. It states: *God changes not the condition of a people, until they change their own condition.* (13:11) *And follow not that of which you have no knowledge.* (17:36) Clearly, the Quran explains that the rules and conventions of a society are not to be blindly followed, but rather active participation is required by the people to bring about change and improvement of the populace's interest. Moreover, the Quran expressly states that an important function of this participatory system of government is the **"election"** of the people's representatives:

*Surely God commands you (the people) to make over positions of trust (in government and state affairs) to those worthy of them.* (4:58)

Thus, it is the people, the general public, who possess the authority to make someone their representative. And this principle was practically demonstrated in the early history of Islam by the Muslims "electing" the first four *Califphs* (i.e. heads of state after Muhammad) either by agreement of all parties, by nomination after consultation with leading representatives of the community, or by appointment by an elective council. Furthermore, the chosen representative is accountable to the people, being in a position of "trust". Thus, governance in Islam is a **"contract"** between the people and their representatives; the people hand over authority to their representatives

and the representatives administer control in the best interest of the people within the limits of their mandate. As Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, stated in his first public address after being elected successor to Muhammad: You have elected me *Khalifa* (head of state), but I claim no superiority over you ... Help me if I act rightly and correct me if I take a wrong course ... Obey me so long as I obey the laws and regulations.

In case I disobey the laws and regulations, I have no right to obedience from you. Thus, the concepts of a **"social contract"** between the people and the government and the **"rule of law"** where leaders are accountable to the people for their actions, are entrenched principles in Islam.

### **INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS**

Similarly, the fundamental elements of the notion of "individual rights" are unequivocally upheld in Islam. First, the Quran champions the **equality** of mankind:

***All men are a single nation.*** (2:213)

It then defines various rights individuals are guaranteed. As already mentioned, Islam calls for complete religious freedom: ***"There is no compulsion in matters of religion"*** (2:256). Similarly, it condemns blind following and stresses the importance of **"freedom of knowledge and conscience"**. It repeatedly instructs man to "reflect" and "ponder" so that an "understanding" of the issues may be achieved that satisfies one's conscience:

*Thus does God make clear to you the messages that you may ponder.* (2:219)

There is surely a sign in this for a people who ponder. (16:67)  
Are the blind and the seeing alike?  
Do you not then reflect? (6:50)

So relate the narrative that they may reflect. (7:176)

*And whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good.* (2:269)

And "free thought" was not only protected, the **right to express** that thought was guaranteed. As an example, Umar, the second Caliph, announced in a public address that he intended to place a restriction on the amount of dowry that grooms gave to their brides so as to prevent extravagance and unnecessary competition within the community. A woman from amongst the crowd of citizens openly spoke out against him by stating that he could not place a limit on God had not limited and quoted the Quran in support of her view. Umar considered what she said and seeing the correctness of her view replied: "The women of Medina have more knowledge than I."

Though a simple incident, it delineates a very important precept: an average citizen was free to form an opinion and express it freely to the leader of the community; in return, the leader calmly considered the input and seeing that it was true, accepted it.

**Equality amongst the sexes** is also a constant theme throughout the Quran. The Quran repeatedly expressly mentions "women" along with "men" so as to leave no doubt as to their equal status, spiritually as well as materially:

*Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the charitable men and the charitable women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the*

*men who guard their chastity and the women who guard, and the men who remember God much and women who remember — God has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward. (33:35)*

*Even the economic independence of the sexes is advanced:*

*For men is the benefit of what they earn. And for women the benefit of what they earn. (4:32).*

*In addition, women were granted the right to inheritance, the right to property ownership and every other individual right granted to man. Keep in mind, this was all in the 6th century.*

### **MAJOR OBSTACLE: Forgetting “Ijtihad”**

Clearly, the foundational components underlying a democratic form of government share many commonalities with entrenched Islamic principles governing statehood. So why the bitter opposition from extremists? Extremists argue that “democracy” is a system of governance in which laws are based on human whim, whereas Islam is transcendental and its principles cannot be undermined by the will of the people. This view is

unwarranted for it neglects that *ijtihad* (the exercise of judgment) is a fundamental source of law in Islam. Islam does recognize the Quran and the Sunnah (the practices of the Prophet Muhammad) as higher sources of authority, but at the same time expects the exercise of judgment to be used to apply these basic, broad principles. This is in fact comparable to the authority granted to the legislature in a “constitutional democracy”: the legislature uses its best judgment in creating laws but the laws validity is conditional upon its consistency with the broader principles contained in the supreme law of the land, the constitution. The four great jurists of Islam, Imams Abu Hanifah, Malik, Shafi and Ahmad, have defined various methods of exercising judgment in creating laws.

- There is “*qiyas*”, or using analogical reasoning to form a decision.
- There is “*istihsan*”, or adopting a rule that is in consonance with the broader rules of justice.
- There is “*istislah*”, or creating a rule conducive to the general societal goals.
- There is also “*istidlal*”, or applying inferences from customs and usages.

These four methods of exercising judgment lay the basis for the creation of laws by a legislative body. And the prime example of the use of legislative authority is the formation of the “**Constitution of Medina**”. This compact, created in 622 C.E., was the first written constitution of a state ever promulgated by a sovereign in human history! It created a city-state in Medina. It acknowledged various parties bound by the treaty. It granted equal rights to the participating parties. And it outlined societal rules of conduct that would ensure the social welfare of the community. Most significant is the fact that it was an agreement catered to satisfy the needs of all participating parties from Meccah, the indigenous Muslims from Medina, and the Arab Jews of Medina). The rights, conditions and role of leadership stipulated therein were all consented to by the party signatories. Consensual, participatory governance was central to this historic, democratic document. Clearly, the extremist view that Islam does not permit man to use the exercise of his judgment to create systems of governance wherein the basic concepts of majority rule and individual rights are established is without any merit

## **CONCLUSION**

Now, I ask you in all fairness, does the faith I presented before you seem inherently incompatible with the values accepted by the modern, civilized world? Can the current day conflicts really be characterized as a “clash of civilizations” between the secular West and Islam? When we look to the fundamentals of Islam, common sense dictates “No”! When analyzing specific extremist views, we see Islam is:

- *a faith that encourages mediation of disputes and places strict limitations and conditions on engaging in conflicts;*
- *a faith establishing freedom of religion and equality for all;*
- *and a faith advocating a “majority rule” type of government in which leaders are chosen by the people and are held to account for their actions;*

Certainly there is no inconsistency there. My friends, Islam is not the *problem*. Rather, a correct understanding of Islam can be the *solution* to combating extremism in the Muslim world. Extremists need to be stripped of the “garb of Islam” they have been wearing to address their political

grievances. As Professor David Forte of Cleveland Marshal School of Law states: “We must not fail ... to distinguish between the homicidal revolutionaries like bin Laden and mainstream Muslim believers”.<sup>6</sup> Using terms like “**Islamic**



**Fundamentalism**” or **“Islamofacism”** when referring to the extremists’ views only legitimate their cause.

And certainly Muslims have the primary responsibility in refuting the ideologies of extremists. *And this is what the Islamic organization I belong to has been doing, not since 9-11, but for the past 100 years.* We produce a translation and commentary of the Quran that specifically addresses the illegitimacy of the extremist views. This work is of such scholarship and quality that all of the largest retail outlets including *Borders and Barnes & Noble* carry them and several universities use them as text books in Islamic studies classes. But we also direct our focus on having this work and others translated in various languages of the world and distributed for free in foreign countries so that the ordinary people may have the opportunity to learn about their religion for themselves in their own language and not rely on some politically motivated Imam telling them what the Arabic sources of Islam state. Recently, we distributed over 50,000 copies of our Russian translation and commentary of the Quran in Russia and other Central Asian countries where we believe there may be a danger of

extremist views spreading due to a lack of correct information about Islam. And we have also directed our attention to the Middle East. We have had most of our literature translated into Arabic and certified by Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, which is widely recognized as the most authoritative institution in the Islamic world. Al-Azhar’s certification gives our literature a stamp of authenticity and, thus, helps facilitate our goal of proving to the uninformed that the extremists’ views are *un-Islamic*. We also are in the process of creating learning centers in various foreign countries, including Kyrgyzstan, Philippines and Albania. These centers – containing libraries, multimedia, lecture halls, etc. – will provide local populations with a place where religion sans politics may be studied and discussed.

Certainly, a lot more needs to be done. It is our earnest prayer that these efforts to **“Reclaim Islam”** will result in the eradication of extremist ideologies amongst Muslims and help facilitate peace in the world. □

1 Washington Post – ABC News Poll, The Washington Post, March 6, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/includes/postpoll\\_iraqwar\\_030606.htm](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/includes/postpoll_iraqwar_030606.htm).

2 Strange, Joe, *Center of Gravity: Primary Sources of Moral or Physical Strength, Power, and Resistance*, Centers of Gravity & Critical Vulnerabilities (Quantico, Va.: Marine Corps Univ. Foundation, 1996), p. ix.

3 Eikmeier, Dale, *Qutbism: An Ideology of Islamic-Fascism*, Parameters, Spring 2007, p.85-98, at 85.

4 In *Dying to Win: the strategic logic of suicide terrorism*, Robert A. Pape creates the first comprehensive database of every suicide terrorist attacks in the world from 1980 until today. His work shows “Suicide terrorism is not primarily a product of Islamic fundamentalism”, and “Every suicide terrorist campaign has had a clear goal that is secular and political: to compel a modern democracy to withdraw military forces from the territory that the terrorists view as their homeland”. Pape, Robert A., *Dying to Win: the Strategic logic of suicide terrorism*, New York: Random House.

5 Tirmidhi, Abwab-ul-Fitan.

6 Forte, David, *Religion is not the Enemy: Don’t look at Bin Laden and See Islam*, National Review Online, October 19, 2001, <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZmRmYzJjNDkwNTgxMjA1OWMzY2UwNTcyOWQ2MmJmYTk=>.

## **DEFAMATION in the Name of Christ: Evangelical Revision of Islamic Teachings and History to Accommodate the Christian Fundamentalist Agenda (Part 2)** By Fatima Rahman, PHD.

*[Members of the U.S. branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement have been preparing responses to each chapter of the book “Unveiling Islam” so that rebuttals to the arguments made therein, the same oft repeated allegations against Islam, may be compiled in one, easy to access publication. This article is the second of two parts of the response to chapter 3 of “Unveiling Islam”, the first being published in the July-September 2007 issue. Ms. Rahman tackles the subject of this particular chapter head on; she meticulously dissects each allegation then thoroughly analyzes its source, significance and validity. Ms. Rahman’s comprehensive work not only refutes the assertion that Islam is a religion of violence, but also provides valuable insight into the agenda of the resurrected Evangelical Movement in the U.S.]*

Having established the inaccuracy of the allegation that Islam has historically endorsed “holy war” and having traced its roots to Christian theology, another one of the core criticisms that the Caner brothers make is that Islam endorses forced

conversions and that this intolerance has riddled the Islamic past. 28 Both points are erroneous. Firstly, the Quran upholds the greatest tolerance for other religions upon the principle that “there is no compulsion in religion” (2:256).<sup>29</sup> And secondly,

from a historical perspective, Islam has had a rich record of tolerance for other faiths, a tolerance that has historically been unmatched by all other major religions.



**The respect shown to members** of other religions is exemplified throughout Islamic history, most notably beginning with the inception of Islam during the Prophet's time, through the Caliphate, the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Ayyubid dynasties, and the Ottoman empire.

**The Quran's position on** freedom of religion is very clear. Maulana Muhammad Ali describes the Quranic perspective as, "religion is treated as a matter between man and his God, a matter of conscience, in which nobody has a right to interfere."<sup>30</sup> Not only does the Quran respect religion as a personal choice, but it repeatedly calls not only for the defense of Islam but for the defense of other religions as well. In fact the Quran places such an incredible amount of stress upon respect for other religions that it commands Muslims not only to defend their religion and their community but also the faiths of other believers and their places of worship. The Quran says:

Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say:

***Our Lord is Allah. And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down (22:40).***<sup>31</sup>

**Maulana Muhammad Ali's** commentary on this verse describes the extraordinary respect that Islam showers on other religions. The religious freedom which was established by Islam thirteen hundred years ago has not yet been surpassed by the most civilized and tolerant of nations. It deserves to be noted that the

lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed not only to stop their own persecution by their opponents and to save their own mosques, but to save churches, synagogues, and cloisters as well—in fact, to establish perfect religious freedom. The mosques, though they are the places where the name of Allah is remembered most of all, come in for their share of protection even after the churches and the synagogues.

**Early Muslims closely followed** these directions, and every commander of an army had express orders to respect all houses of worship, and even the cloisters of monks, along with their inmates.<sup>32</sup> Sacrificing one's life for another religion as ordained in the Quran epitomizes the highest respect that Islam has for other religions. It goes beyond mere tolerance to actual protection and defense of other faiths. Thus, the idea that Islam is intolerant of other faiths, let alone that it endorses forced conversions as argued by the Caner brothers is completely baseless.

**The veneration bestowed upon** other faiths as found in the Quran is a principle that was practiced strikingly uniformly throughout Islam's history. One of the most glaring examples is found during the Prophet's time in the conception of the Constitution of Medina, a contract of unity under which Muslims and Jews shared the same privileges and rights. The spirit of the Constitution is captured by the following excerpt from the Constitution which reads,

*"The Jews of Banu 'Awf are a community (umma) along with the believers. To the Jews their religion (din) and to the Muslims their religion."*<sup>33</sup>

This attitude to live as one and in peace with members of other faiths, as exemplified by the Prophet, continued throughout Islam's history. As Islam's popularity grew so did its political rule, and this principle of freedom of religion and respect for other faiths was sustained. Members of other faiths which came into Islamic political jurisdiction were given rights and privileges equal to those of Muslims. Armstrong describes this phenomenon. "In the Islamic empire Jews like Christians had full religious liberty; the Jews lived there in peace until the creation of the State of Israel in our own century. The Jews of Islam never suffered like the Jews of Christendom."<sup>34</sup> In fact, Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians were simply given the title of "believers" as were Muslims.

**THE CANER BROTHERS** BLINDLY accuse all of Islamic history as intolerant, but they focus special attention upon Umar for being intolerant towards Christians.<sup>35</sup> This is quite ironic because Umar historically has the reputation of being one of the most tolerant and merciful rulers to have ever lived. An excerpt from **Alan Heston** describes Umar's supervision of non-Muslim regions. Umar was determined to maintain good discipline. The Arab soldiers were not to enjoy the fruits of victory; the conquered lands were not to be divided among the generals, but left to the existing cultivators... Muslims were not allowed to settle in the cities. Instead, new garrison towns (*amsar*) were built for them at strategic locations. <sup>36</sup>

**Not only were Christian** regions left in tact exactly as they were found before coming under Islamic jurisdiction as shown by **[continued on page 18]**

**Functional Operational Beliefs of Muslims of the Lahore Section:- You are urged to stop Misrepresenting the Truth about the LAHORE Ahmadi-Muslims. I have categorically highlighted our beliefs so that you become edified. It will be VERY foolish to continue to call us Qadianis.**

**CONSIDER THIS: It makes perfect sense that WE should tell you what We believe, and NOT for YOU to UNILATERALLY tell US what WE believe!**

### ***The Lahore - Ahmadi MUSLIM Beliefs***

1. Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is **Khatam al-Nabiyyin**, the interpretation of which is that he is the **Greatest and LAST** of the prophets.
2. The Holy Qur'an is the **Final** Scripture.
3. No prophet, *new or old*, shall come **AFTER** the Holy Prophet Muhammad, p.b.u.h.
4. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was **NOT** a prophet, but a **Mujjaddid** (Reformer).
5. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad **NEVER** changed his claims, views, or definition of prophethood in 1901.
6. Belief in the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a **Mujjaddid** is **NOT** essential to become a Muslim, but his acceptance is necessary in the interest of progressive Islam.
7. Anyone who believes in the ***Kalima - La-ilaha illallahu Muhammad ur Rasul Allah*** (*There is only one God and Muhammad is His Apostle*) - is a Muslim, **NOT** a kaafir.
8. It is permitted to say prayers behind any Muslim Imaam **PROVIDED HE IS NOT GUILTY OF DUBBING OTHER MUSLIMS INFIDELS/KAAFIRS.**
9. Marriage with *non-Ahmadi* Muslims permitted.
10. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, **Wahi-e-Nabuwwat** (prophetic revelation) has ceased, only **Wahi-e-Walayyat** (saintly revelation) is continued. Hazrat Mirza's revelation was *Wahi-e-Walayyat*, **NOT** *Wahi-e-Nabuwwat*.
11. The Founder of the **Lahore** Section was Maulana **Muhammad Ali** -- closest companion/disciple of *Hazrat Mirza Sahib*.
12. Members of this section are *Ahmadi-Muslims*, known also as *Ahmadis* or *Ahmadi-Muslims*.

**Any postulate contrary to what I have capitulated above is a deliberate & blatant effort to tarnish the truth. You have been fully informed about our beliefs. Please: Allow US to tell YOU what WE believe; NOT the converse!**

**A QUESTION that was Asked:****Where were the leaders of the *OTHER* Muslim denominations at a time when Inter-faith is so badly needed?**

**ANSWER.** Invitations were issued to other leaders of the Muslim community indicating that their presence would be greatly appreciated; however, some of them stated that they had other commitments. Two of them rejected my Invitations.

Given the fact that the Conference was Inter-Faith, and it depicted our co-existence with people who differ with us/each other, you would have thought that leaders of various denominations would have made themselves available and encourage their assemblies to do the same. Evidently this was not the case.

ON the other hand, while there may be multifarious reasons for their not showing up, I have been told the following:

- *We thought the Interfaith Conference was held by the QUADIANIS. (This is a flimsy excuse as The Islamic Sunrise [for the past 20 years] has been clearly and categorically emphasizing that we have nothing to do with the Qadianis, nor the "KAFIR-CALLING" Sunnis for that matter.)*
- *We heard that there may be acts of violence committed at the site -- given the fact that you and your people internationally have been declared Infidels, Apostates, Heretics, etc.*
- *Some of the leaders and others did not show up for they did not want to be GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION!*

DESPITE the above reasons, we are sincerely grateful for the success of the conference, and everyone's presence was highly appreciated. Personally, I am especially grateful to some "strangers" who – after reading our literature --- have told me: YOU GUYS HAVE THE RIGHT CONCEPTS; the right ones that AMERICA needs.

IN the same vein, we do not aspire fame nor popularity! We want everyone to be aware that, despite the fact we have been declared NON-MUSLIMS and we are constantly told that we are PRETENDING to be Muslims, by the Grace Of God, we have been for the past -100- years promoting a peaceful and tolerant Islam. We have committed ourselves to NEVER retaliate {*despite the persecution we constantly and persistently endure at the at hands and tongues of the perpetrators*} with violence. True, we are a MINORITY, and prefer to remain so if it means having the *correct, proper* and ever *practical* interpretation and demonstration of Islam.

KNOW that the very people who declare us Infidels, and refuse to affiliate with us, are part of parcel of the International Muslim community that is so often attributed to 'Terrorism', 'Radical Islam', 'Extremism,' etc. While we are the 'MINORITY', we have no room for violence. We believe that God is the Judge; we do not declare anyone Apostate or Heretic even he/she may persecutes us physically, mentally, and emotionally. In the final analysis, the concepts of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman are pristine, true to the core, and so practical that they will be around for a very long time.

**SEE YOU at NEXT YEAR's INTER-FAITH CONFERENCE!**



**Rabbi Jeffery Kurtz-LENDNER at the 2009 Interfaith Conference**

**Continued from page -15-**

-- this excerpt, but many Christians actually preferred Islamic rule. In fact, the tolerance and respect shown to non- Muslims under Umar's rule is often compared with the persecution and discrimination experienced by non- Christians and even some sects of Christianity under Christian rule throughout history. Alan Heston, in his article titled, *Crusades and Jihads: A Long-Run Economic Perspective*, compares the treatment of minorities under Muslim and Christian rule. "Umar permitted Christians and Jews to live in Jerusalem, while Byzantium had restricted Jews and the crusaders were to ban Jews and Muslims."<sup>37</sup> History shows that not only were Jews and Muslims persecuted under Christian rule but even Roman Christians were persecuted under Byzantine's Eastern Christian rule. Armstrong describes the reaction of the Western Christians as the Islamic nation led by Umar replaced the dictatorial Byzantine rule. "Indeed some of the Roman Christians, who had been persecuted by the Greek Orthodox for their heretical opinions, greatly preferred Muslim to Byzantine rule."<sup>38</sup> It is quite

ironic that the accusations made against Umar by the Caner brothers are in reality applicable to the Christian leaders of the Byzantine Empire and the Crusaders.

**The respectful** treatment of Christians, Jews, and other believers under Islamic rule continued in Muslim Spain in the 8th century. In fact, the status of Jews under Muslim rule is recorded as one of the most positive periods in their history. Erwin Rosenthal describing this writes, "*The Talmudic age apart, there is perhaps no more formative and positive time in our long and checkered history than that under the empire of Islam*"<sup>39</sup> Reza Shah-Kazemi, a scholar in comparative religions adds,

**One particularly rich episode** in this golden period was experienced by the Jews of Muslim Spain. As has been abundantly attested by historical records, the Jews enjoyed not just freedom from oppression, but also an extraordinary revival of cultural, religious, theological, and mystical creativity. As Titus Burckhardt

writes, 'the greatest beneficiaries of Islamic rule were the Jews, for in Spain they enjoyed their finest intellectual flowering since their dispersal from Palestine to foreign lands.'<sup>40</sup>

**The same cannot be said of** Jews or Muslims under Christian rule. Both Muslims and Jews have suffered great persecution under Christendom historically. One of the most glaring examples is the persecution of Muslims and Jews during the conquests of the Crusaders. In the essay, "*Recollecting the Spirit of Jihad*", Reza Shah Kazemi demonstrates the application of Quranic mercy and compassion through Islamic history. Kazemi provides a compelling vignette of the treatment of Muslims during the Christian conquest of the Crusades and the treatment of Christians under the Muslim sultan Saladin's reign. He writes, "Saladin's magnanimity at this defining moment of history will always be contrasted with the barbaric sacking of the city and indiscriminate murder of its inhabitants by the Christian Crusaders in 1099."<sup>41</sup> He then

provides the following excerpt from Saladin's biographer Stanley Lane-Poole.

**One recalls the savage conquest** by the first Crusaders in 1099, when Godfrey and Tancred rode through streets choked with the dead and the dying, when defenseless Moslems were tortured, burnt, and shot down in cold blood on the towers and roof the Temple, when the blood of wanton massacre defiled the honor of Christendom and stained the scene where once the gospel of love and mercy had been preached. 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,' was a forgotten beatitude when the Christians made shambles of the Holy City. Fortunate were the merciless, for they obtained mercy at the hands of the Moslem Sultan... If the taking of Jerusalem were the only fact known about Saladin, it were enough to prove him the most

chivalrous and great-hearted...<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, the Crusades are not a notable exception to the horrendous treatment of non-Christians under Christian authority but rather representative of the plight of non-Christians throughout much of Christian history. The over two hundred year Papal-authorized *Reconquista* of Spain was characterized by forced conversions of all Muslims and Jews in Spain accompanied by torture and death. The *Reconquista* was followed by the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions which were the genocidal murdering of all remaining Jews and Muslims in the region. Heston provides a summary of the key elements that composed the Spanish Inquisition.

The infamous Spanish form of the Inquisition followed the capture of Cordoba in 1236. The victors built a church to partially replace the mosque, a common enough

practice though a major loss to architectural history. Muslims and Jews, if they had not fled, were to convert or die. Many did convert and still were the victims of torture to confess their heresy, as all *conversos* were regarded with suspicion. Another reaction to Muslim rule in Spain was to regard bathing as sacrilegious, and baths were destroyed, as was done later at Aztec sites... Ferdinand and Isabella issued an edict expelling all Jews... there were many aspects of the *reconquista* of Spain that set back the cause of learning. And the intolerance continued to flower throughout the Counter Reformation in the sixteenth century, the refugees taking their knowledge to Northern Europe. The last execution for heresy in Spain took place in 1826, and the Inquisition was officially suppressed in 1834.<sup>43</sup> The few Jews that survived the Inquisition turned to the Ottomans for refuge and protection.<sup>44</sup>



Professor Septimus Barrock and Pastor Brandford at the Inter-faith Conference October 2009

**Thus, a historical perspective** reveals that from the inception of Islam and throughout its history, non-Muslims under Muslim rule experienced freedom of religion, were free from persecution, and enjoyed the same rights and liberties as the Muslims. This treatment stems from the Quranic principle of freedom of religion, and its teachings of humanity,

mercy, and compassion. Quite oppositely Christian history from its early beginnings is marred with intolerance and persecution of Muslims, Jews, and even some sects of Christianity as embodied during the Crusades, the *Reconquista*, and the Inquisition.

The Caner brothers link their account of Islamic history to

present day with the argument that the emergence of extremist organizations today are a resurfacing of offensive war in the name of God which has characterized Islam's initial thousand year history. This argument like their other allegations is also flawed because of several fundamental reasons. Firstly, this paper has

already examined the falsity of the claim that Islam is a violent religion, demonstrating that the Quran does not endorse any form of offensive war or conquest and that historically Islamic expansion has not occurred under the guise of religion. Thus, the allegation that these extremist groups have reemerged to implement a traditional, religiously ordained principle is once again erroneous.

Secondly, even if these groups are hypothetically motivated by some past tradition of religious conquest, which as shown did not exist, the Caner brothers fail to provide a causal rationale for why these groups, one thousand years later suddenly have found the desire to revert back to this past. An analysis of these groups proves that they have not emerged because of a sudden desire to implement some construed religious ideals, but rather are politically-aimed organizations, born out of some political or social grievance.

***The Caner brothers are guilty of the same intentional neglect*** that much of the foreign policy makers, politicians, media, and anti-Islamic organizations in the West are guilty of which is the failure to recognize the origins and grievances of these groups. Instead, these organizations are conveniently labeled as Islamically motivated zealots bent upon spreading a conservative and fundamentalist interpretation of Islam. This label accommodates U.S. foreign policy's support of dictatorial regimes in the Muslim world and Israel's unlawful behavior as well as suits Evangelical groups' religious support for Israel.

A great majority of the extremist organizations that are headlining the news today were born only within the past thirty years, and

behind each one of these organizations there is a foundational political injustice which they are fighting. That these organizations were born in the 1960s to 1980s is not a coincidence, rather it is due to the widespread consequences of the 1967 Six-Day War. It was this war which resulted in Israel's massive conquest of Arab lands, "including the Sinai peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan."<sup>45</sup>

It was the 1967 War which officially marked the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, namely the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This directly resulted in the 1987 creation of Hamas, an organization with the central aim of ending Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. Hamas is a deeply nationalist movement that is composed of both Palestinian Muslims and Christians, motivated by the drive to end Israeli occupation. In fact, it is Hamas' goal of attaining rights for Palestinians which brings together members of different faiths to support it. One of the Christian candidates running under the Hamas banner speaks of the political nature of his party, "I said that I am a Christian (Greek Orthodox) and I have a great loyalty to my Christianity. I am proud of that. But, here, we are speaking about political issues. I could win the support of all the Palestinian parties as I have done with Hamas."<sup>46</sup> Religion is obviously not the driving force behind this extremist organization. In fact, its recent victory in the Palestinian parliament proved that it was not their affiliation with Islam but rather their combined platform of national resistance and internal social reform which

brought them support from both Muslim and Christian Palestinians.

Similarly, the group of extremist Egyptian organizations such as Jamaat al-Jihad and Gamaa Islamiya, born out of the post-1967 era, were also ultimately nationalist responses to the widespread corruption within their dictatorial government, which in the opinion of many was and continues to be a surrogate government of the United States. It is no coincidence that Egypt has been a fertile ground for these extremist organizations, after all after Israel, Egypt is the second largest receiver of US foreign aid since its signing of the 1978 Camp David Accords. It was after this signing, that dissent among the Egyptian population grew as the Egyptian government became to be viewed as a marionette government for the U.S. rather than a sovereign nation undertaking its own decisions. This resulted in nationalist movements looking to regain a national identity, free from American influence. It is the opinion of these groups that it was and continues to be their government's use of American diplomatic cover that allows Egypt to suppress freedoms and liberties within its borders.

Esposito describes this phenomenon as he explains what occurred within a few years of the Camp David Accords. He writes, In early September 1981, faced with mounting discontent and opposition, in a sensational move the government launched a massive dragnet, arresting more than 1500 people. Secular and Islamic opposition publications were banned. Those imprisoned represented the entire political spectrum, from extreme right to

**[continued on page 22]**



## SUFI EDIFICATION

When we read books written by the classical religious scholars, we discover that according to the saints and holy men of Islam there are three ranks of spiritual nearness to God: *fana fish-Shaikh*, *fana fir-rasul*, and *fana fi-llah*.

Those persons who attain the rank of *fana fir-rasul* become imbued with the colour of prophets of the past due to perfect following, and in this state call themselves by the names of various prophets such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, (the Holy Prophet) *Muhammad* and *Ahmad*. They also utter expressions such as "I am the prophet" and "I am the messenger". These persons are not prophets in point of fact, but belong to the category of saints. Muslim scholars of the faith have written as follows to explain the concept of *fana*:

- **Professor Yusuf Saleem Chishti:** This interpreter and commentator of the works of Iqbal writes: "The first stage is *fana fish-shaikh*, producing the qualities of the spiritual leader in oneself; the second stage is *fana fir-rasul*, producing the qualities of the Holy Prophet within oneself; the third stage is *fana fi-llah*, producing the taint of the attributes of God in oneself." (*Sharh Bab Jibreel*, p. 267)
- **Shah Wali-ullah of Dehli** (d. 1763 C.E.): Recognised as mujaddid of the 12th Century Hijra, this eminent scholar wrote: "Piety (*taqwa*) means to stay within the limits of the religious law. The love of rites of God is applied to loving the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet, and the Holy Shrine (Ka'ba), and in fact to love everything that is associated with God, including even love for the saints. Some people call it *fana fir-rasul* or *fana fish-shaikh*." (*Altaf al-Qudus*, p. 93, Gujranwala, Pakistan, 1964)
- **Khawaja Shams-ud-Din Siyalwi:** "After this I asked, What is *fana fish-shaikh*? The Khawaja said: The disciple should be so engrossed in the being of his master that he should not be conscious of his own movements, and, in fact, the very form and figure of the master and disciple become one." (*Mirat al-'ashiqeen*, p. 229, Islamic Book Foundation, Lahore, 1981)
- **Khawaja Zia-ullah Naqshbandi:** "The rank of *fana fir-rasul* is attained when all the characteristics and qualities of the Holy Prophet are to be found in one, and all one's deeds, movements, habits, devotions and meditations are exactly according to the manner of the Holy Prophet. Perfect good fortune is that God should paint His servant with the color and qualities of His friend, the Holy

Prophet." (*Maqasid as-Salikeen*, p. 46, Lahore)

- Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (d. 1905 C.E.): He was a prominent Deobandi theologian of the last century. Answering a question, he wrote: "**Question:** What are *fana fish-shaikh* and *fana fir-rasul*? From where are these concepts established, and what have Sufis said about it? "Answer: Both these words are from the terminology of spiritual leaders (*masha'ikh*). The meaning is to obey God and have overwhelming love for Him. Its basis is in the Islamic teachings (*sharh*): Follow me [i.e. Muhammad], and God will love you [the Quran 3:30]." (*Fatawa Rashidiyya*, p. 48, 49, Islamic Kutab, Karachi)
- **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad** explained the concept of *fana fir-rasul* in exactly the same way as other Islamic scholars, both before and after his time. He wrote: "Muhaddas due to his complete following of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and on account of his being *fana fir-rasul*, is included in the being of the Last of the Prophets [i.e. Holy Prophet Muhammad], as the fraction is included in the whole." (*Izala Auham*, p. 575)
- "God gives the honour of His word to a person who is *fana fin-nabi* [same as *fana fir-rasul*], just as He does with His prophets, and in these communications the servant to whom He speaks is spoken to by Him face-to-face, as it were. The servant asks a question and God replies to it, even though this question-answer may go on for fifty times or more." (*Zameema Anjam Atham*, p. 15)
- "At the end of every century, especially a century in which people have departed from faith and honesty, and one which is full of darkness, God raises someone who is a substitute for a prophet and whose nature reflects the image of the prophet. That substitute-prophet shows people, through his own being, the qualities of the prophet whom he obeys." (*Ainah Kamalat Islam*, p. 247)
- "Turn not your attention to what anyone says, and like the true lover become *fana fir-rasul* [effaced in the Holy Prophet Muhammad] with your word, deed, praise and obedience, for therein lie all the blessings." (*Maktubat Ahmadiyya, Part I*, p. 44, 1883)

**Those persons whose nature is a mirror reflecting the image of the Holy Prophet, and who are *fana fir-rasul* or *fana fin-nabi*, who in other words are known as saints (*muhaddas*) and reformer (*mujaddid*), these are the ones amongst whom is included Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.**

**[continued from page 18]**

extreme left, Muslim brothers and militants, as well as Marxists, Muslims, and Copts, young and old, journalists, writers, professors, and other professions”<sup>47</sup>

**It is precisely this combination** of political suppression along with American allegiance practiced by some Arab governments which has led to the birth of extremist groups in Egypt and throughout the Muslim world. Other transnational, extremist movements such as Al- Qaeda were also triggered in response to some political incident. Al- Qaeda originated as a response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Micheal Knapp, a Middle East analyst with the US Army National Ground Intelligence Center, comments that, “Bin Laden’s ideology, however, is really more political than religious.”<sup>48</sup>

In fact, all of the grievances that Bin Laden publicly lists are political in nature. For example, the occupation of Palestinian lands and the strong presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia. These few examples explain the emergence of extremist organizations as manifestations of political injustices occurring in

the Middle East, with many of them characterized by nationalist sentiment. The dissent aimed at the United States arises from the United States’ financial and diplomatic support of dictatorial regimes that stifle freedom and liberties and are seen as representing American policy rather than national and regional interests. The dissent does not stem from a desire to reconvene some past “offensive *jihad*,” as alleged by the Caner brothers.

**This paper has shown that** *Unveiling Islam* is a compilation of deliberately constructed fabrications and lies that seek to incite hatred towards Islam and the Muslim world. Many of the elements that the Caner brothers characterize Islam’s past with such as holy war and intolerance of other religions are historically features describing much of Christianity’s past rather than Islam’s. It is the fundamentalist Christian fanaticism that produces a piece like *Unveiling Islam* that also justifies revising history, publishing lies, and misinforming a public in order to demonize Islam, all in the name of spreading Christianity. The intolerance that the Caner brothers portray Islam endorsing

is actually practiced by them, manifesting itself in their anti-Islam rhetoric. By spreading these lies about Islam, they are cultivating hostility towards Islam and Muslims throughout the world which only adds to the trying circumstances that characterize the global atmosphere today. Instead of contributing to the effort of creating dialogue and understanding between members of our society, the Caner brothers undermine this endeavor that so many organizations like the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement are undertaking. It is especially disturbing that the Caner brothers are exploiting their past as “insiders” and discrediting their current positions as academics to propagate misconceptions about Islam that have been around since the Middle Ages. Religious debate is an important and educational tool for society, but it should be based on honest and historically accurate information.

**It is my sincere hope, that this** paper has both provided insight into a misunderstood religion and exposed the fallacy behind much of the anti-Islamic propaganda that surrounds us today.

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In terms of our physical evolution, domestication of animals and use of their flesh and milk is and was a cornerstone of our physical development. Similarly, *control* and *sacrifice* of our animal desires is the cornerstone of our spiritual development. Man has the same basic instincts as all other animals. He strives for power, food and survival of his species. These desires are essential for his physical development, but when allowed to run out of control, they are the very means of his destruction. They provide the motive force or energy for our physical progress, but when allowed to run rampant they consume our spirit. What differentiates man from lower animals is the Divine spirit, which is referred to in the Holy Qur'aan in the following words:

*So when I made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit...*  
(Ch.15: 29).

*And certainly We create man of an extract of clay Then We make him a small life germ in a firm resting-place, Then We make the life-germ a clot, then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators! (Ch.23:12-14)*

Islam likens the development of the human soul to the development of the child in the mother's womb. When in utero, the child is affected by what the mother eats, drinks, or what drug or medicine she takes. When the human child is born he has the impress of Divine Goodness and is innocent. God refers to this impress of His goodness upon the human child as His spirit (or *Ruh*). As the child grows his conscious actions affect the spirit which becomes his Soul (or *Nafs*) and either evolves or remains stunted. When his physical existence ends, it is the soul which

embarks on the Journey into the Hereafter.

The animal consciousness of man is referred to in the Holy Qur'aan as *Ammarah*, (*The Commanding*) because of its overwhelming nature. *Ammarah* is the nascent condition of the soul, in the garb of bestial passions, when natural impulses predominate. Awareness of the Oneness of God, its Creator and His attributes is essential for the evolutionary journey of the human soul, and this is accomplished by complete submission to Divine guidance. Thus does human consciousness evolve into cosmic consciousness. Man is taught control of these desires through Divine guidance which makes the human brain different from animals (i.e. ability to differentiate right from wrong). By controlling these animal desires, using them in accordance with Divine guidance spiritual evolution takes place. The Holy Qur'aan refers to two further stages of development of the human soul: *Lawwama* (*The Self Accusing Spirit*) and *Mutmainna* (*The Soul at Rest*).

Islam teaches that man is not the slave of evil. He can show the best of virtues, and he will strive. We cannot put our burden on others, as we have to evolve something out of ourselves. If an operation on a surgeon's body, or taking some medicine himself, cannot cure his patient, then others action cannot raise us to our goal. Like other entities in Nature, we need some systematic course suitable to each stage of progress; some disciplinary measures to create in us a disposition to pursue it. Islam brings us both. Love of God means, love and awareness of His attributes and putting them into practice in our daily lives.

Nurturing of the human consciousness and its evolution towards the Divine, requires *control* or *sacrifice* of the basic animal desires through trials and tribulations. The human soul evolves from the lower to the highest stage, and gets closer to God. Trials and tribulations are for the purpose of exposing the hidden condition of mans soul, both its weaknesses and its strengths. For example, if a person in adversity, lies, bribes, steals, or breaks his promise to get out of it, then this situation has made apparent to him character flaws, and he is provided an opportunity to make amends. On the other hand those who face adversity with patience their character evolves, and their hidden potential is manifested. A tree which sheds all its leaves and faces the harsh winter bears flowers and fruit in springtime. The Holy Qur'aan refers to the beneficial effect of adversity on human spiritual evolution in the following words: And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits. And give good news to the patient. (Ch.2:155)

All Prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, and Muhammad (***the last of this chain of honored servants and exemplars to mankind***), had to face adversity, to evolve spiritually. Adversity evolved patience in them, which is a Divine attribute. They were humble in their submission to God and in their dealings with fellow men. Thus, humility is another virtue which is nurtured by adversity. They all taught belief in and service of One God. They submitted to and served God by serving His Creation. Those who follow the righteous servants of God, evolve similarly.

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## Abraham's "SACRIFICE"

The Holy Qur'aan relates the following about the sacrifices made by Abraham and his family: *So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. But, when he became of age to work with him, he said, O my son I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee; So consider what thou seest O my father, do as thou art commanded: If Allah please, thou wilt find me patient.* "So when they both submitted and he had thrown him down upon his forehead and, We called out to him saying, 'O Abraham thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision. Thus do we reward the doers of good'. (Ch. 37:101-105)

Abraham, by his belief and actions, provided an example for his people and all of us to follow. He realized that the belief and practice of the principle of Unity of the Divine being was essential for physical and moral evolution of man. He stood upright to uphold this principle. For this he rejected the deities of his community, in particular worship of heavenly bodies, a common and pervasive form of worship. He willingly became the object of wrath of his community, thus rejecting all lords besides the One God. He sacrificed all his basic animal desires to uphold this principle. This was manifested by him leaving his community, moving into the wilderness, and leaving his infant son and wife over there. His wife according to Hadith asked him, "Is it by God's commandment that thou art doing this?" Abraham's reply was, "yes." Then said Hagar: "God will not leave us to perish". Here a mother is sacrificing her basic animal instinct of motherhood, in submission to God's command. She like Abraham is also manifesting a supreme example of trust in God. God provides for their physical sustenance by the discovery of the spring of Zam Zam right under the heels of the infant, which then became a resting place for caravans and to this day sustains the city of Makkah. He provided spiritual sustenance for the desert of Arabia and the whole world by raising from the progeny of Ishmael the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

When the son, Ishmael, reaches maturity, and is able to help and assist his father, Abraham sees in a vision that he is sacrificing him. The father who is a prophet does not impose the interpretation of his vision upon his son, but instead asks his opinion. This tells us that freedom of expression is essential for our spiritual development. The son, who is not a prophet at this time but a teenager, replies, "O my father, do as thou art commanded: If Allah please, thou wilt find me

patient." This is another excellent example of sacrifice of the basic human instinct of survival at an age where animal desires are at their peak performance. They both then perform the universal gesture of animal submission and humility by prostrating on the ground, thus physically demonstrating that their animal passions are in control and in full submission to the command of their Lord. God thus guided them and through them the whole of humanity, towards the true purpose of sacrifice and away from the erroneous and prevalent practice of human sacrifice.

### FOR THE CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF ISLAM:

Read THE ISLAMIC SUNRISE and books produced and reproduced by the Lahore Ahmadi MUSLIM Scholars. Those of you who attended our Interfaith Conference on October 18, 2009 heard and witnessed that WE ARE NOT QUADIANIS; that we believe in the Absolute Finality of Prophet of Muhammad [p.b.u.h.]. Don't continue to be misled by the so-called learned or Sheiks who to lie to you. Be informed.

The time for fairy-tale beliefs are over. It is a SHAME that we have been declared *Kaafirs/Infidels* because we advocate the DEATH of JESUS, or the Non-Corporeal Ascension of the Prophet [p.b.u.h.] when there are prominent SUNNI scholars who have authored the same. This is a clear indication as to how the masses are misinformed.

YES! the time for blind-following is over. The Teachings of the Lahore Ahmadiyya are here to stay. We are a declared and confirmed MINORITY; we know that the truth is with the minority. The Qur'an is big on the minority being on the right track. We don't get disappointed as our beliefs are real. It is a fact that we have a long history of being NON-VIOLENT -- being victims at the hands of the MAJORITY who called themselves true followers of MUHAMMAD, and us HYPOCRITES -- pretending to be MUSLIMS. AGAIN, we don't count numbers; we count QUALITY in numbers!

As Hajj has just passed us, the *Haajis* have pelted or stoned the DEVIL in Arabia, let us now expect a change of conduct, especially their not calling other Muslims *INFIDELS/Kaafirs*.

Regarding stoning of the Devil: Note that Arabia at the time of Hajj more so is a holy place and in the words of my late father:

**DON'T PELT AT THE DEVIL; PELT OUT  
THE DEVIL -- FROM YOU."**

**'THE INK OF THE SCHOLAR IS GREATER  
THAN THE BLOOD OF THE MARTYR.'**

## Islamic practice of SACRIFICE:

The practice of sacrificing a healthy, young animal during the annual pilgrimage made by Muslims from all over the world celebrates the Abrahamic Sacrifice. The Holy Qur'aan summarizes this spirit of sacrifice in the following words:

*And for every nation  
We appointed acts of  
devotion that they  
might mention the  
name of God on what  
He has given them of  
the cattle  
quadrupeds. So your  
God is One God,  
therefore to Him  
should you submit,  
And give good news  
to the humble...*

*Not their flesh, nor  
their blood, reaches  
God, but to Him is  
acceptable  
observance of duty  
on your part. Thus  
has He made them  
subservient to you,  
that you may magnify  
God for guiding you  
aright. And give  
good news to those  
who do good to  
others. (Ch. 22:34,37 )*

The purpose of sacrifice therefore is Example of Abraham serves as a common means of realizing this Providence and we owe it to ourselves to follow his path. I close with the following verses from the Holy Qur'aan, the Bible and the Vedas:

*"Praise be to Allah,  
the Lord of the worlds."* (Holy Qur'aan)

to uphold the principle of *Unity of God* in our daily lives. It is to constantly remind ourselves that He is Almighty, Possessor of all perfect attributes; to practice His attributes by doing good to others, by being humble and guarding against our animal passions. The sacrifice of the animal reminds us not only that by possessing control over it God has

provided for our physical growth and development, but more importantly, it also serves as a reminder for the need to control our animal desires in a manner that it can be used to nurture our spirit. The animal desires of man have gone rampant in our age and the fire ignited by this is consuming all of humanity. It has stunted our spiritual growth and limited our vision only to material growth. We as human beings are the creation of One God who is our Creator, Sustainer, Nurturer and Evolver. The *"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."* (Deuteronomy) *"Creator of the Universe, may we receive thy supreme sin-destroying light,*

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*May Thou guide our intellect in the right  
direction."*(Vedas) □

# Letter to Pakistan TV Channel

***Grave inaccuracies in programme about the Woking Mosque: Dr. Zahid Aziz {Reproduced here in its entirety by the Editor of THE ISLAMIC SIUNRISE for those who are interested in the truth.}***

The following letter, which I wrote to Mr Ahmad Ali Sayed, PTV Global Representative for UK, on 12th September 2009 is self-explanatory.

"I am writing to you in regard to the programme *Raat Gaye* broadcast on 1st September 2009 on the PTV Global channel for UK. It contained an item about the Woking Mosque, in which there were several mis-statements about the history of the Mosque. I am pointing these out to you in my capacity as the creator and editor of the website [www.wokingmuslim.org](http://www.wokingmuslim.org), which is dedicated to the history of this Mosque. In fact, some photographs shown in the programme were taken from my website.

I list below the wrong statements in order in which they occurred in the programme.

1. It was stated that the Woking Mosque has the distinction that the first English translation of the Quran by a Muslim was "done there". Later the programme stated that it was the translation by Marmaduke Pickthall and showed its cover page.

In fact, the only English translation of the Quran to be published from the Woking Mosque was that by Maulana Muhammad Ali, Head of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, and it was published in 1917. Mr. Pickthall's translation appeared many years later in 1930.

2. It was stated that in 1912 Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din purchased the Woking Mosque from the son of Dr Leitner (who had built the Mosque).

This is an **absolutely incorrect** statement. In fact, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din got the Mosque handed over to a Trust whose members were Syed Ameer Ali and Sir Abbas Ali Baig, two famous Muslims living in England at the time. Perhaps your programme makers did not want it to be known that other Muslim leaders collaborated with Ahmadis in the running of this Mosque.

3. It was then wrongly stated that from 1912 to 1962 the Mosque: (a) remained in the control of "Qadianis", and (b) that "Qadianis" preached their own ideology from there. These are **absolutely untrue** statements.

(a) The Woking Mosque Trust never had any Ahmadis on it. Its members were leading persons of the general Muslim community. Even the ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Shaikh Hafiz Wahba, was on this Trust at one time. Since 1953, when the Mission was still run by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, the chairman of the Mosque Trust was always, *ex-officio*, the High Commissioner of Pakistan, with other officials from the High Commission also as members of the Trust. This is still the case today.

(b) The Woking Muslim Mission did not preach any Ahmadiyya ideology. It preached the basic Islam only, as recognised by all Muslims. What was preached can be read even today in the Mission's magazine *The Islamic Review* from 1913 onwards.

Other notable Muslims, with no connection to the Ahmadiyya Movement, frequently gave *khutbas* at the Woking Mosque. Even the ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Shaikh Hafiz Wahba, mentioned above, delivered *khutbas* here in the 1930s and 1940s. A full list of such prominent Muslims would make this letter very lengthy indeed.

4. The programme then stated that the last "Qadiani" imam, Bashir Ahmad Misri, appointed in 1964, discovered "true Islam" after his appointment by touring the whole Muslim world, and he then rebelled against "Qadiani" ideology.

However, there is a lengthy explanation by Mr Misri himself, published on several anti-Ahmadiyya websites, in which he states that at the time of his appointment he was a Sunni Muslim and had already written articles against the Ahmadiyya Movement. The "world tour" mentioned in your programme was, Mr Misri writes, undertaken by him *after* he had left his position as imam. So the story that after becoming imam at Woking he "discovered true Islam" is belied by Mr Misri's own well-publicised account.

The programme went on to say that "hundreds of non-Muslims" accepted Islam at this Mosque. But most of those conversions took place in the period when, according to your programme, the "Qadianis" were in control of the Mosque!

The programme also stated that many Muslim heads of state visited the Woking Mosque. In this connection it displayed three photographs of such visits (taken from my website). In all three photographs, the Ahmadi imam of the Mosque is welcoming the head of state! If this was a "Qadiani" Mosque, why were Muslim heads of state visiting it and praying behind the imams of the Mosque?

I hope you will provide me with an opportunity to appear on your channel and present the true history of the work of the Woking Muslim Mission during the fifty year period that the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement managed it. "

**Note: I {Dr. Zahid Aziz} did receive a prompt reply by e-mail to my letter above, asking me for my phone number. I provided it but there was no further response.**

## MAY ALLAH GUIDE US TO THE TRUTH!

**The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore [AAIIL] stands for:**

**The Ahmadiyya Community For The Propagation of Islam** — propagation of Islam as demonstrated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h.]. The main object of the **AAIIL** is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Qur'an and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h.] --- *obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions*, like the Isra & Mir'aj of the Holy Prophet [p.b.u.h.] being a corporeal experience, or, Jesus still being physically alive.

As Muslims of this School of Thought, we postulate that Islam seeks to attract the hearts and minds of people toward the truth with: (i) *reasoning*, (ii) *good moral example*, and (iii) *the natural beauty of its principles*. We do not aspire to gain political power, or allow the use of force in support of its principles.

We also postulate that **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad** (1835-1908) — the Mujjaddid of the fourteen century [*in light of the Prophet's prophecy in Abu Dawud, Volume 3, page 1194: "Allah will raise for this community at the end of every hundred years the one who will renovate religion for it"*] — *arose to remind the world that Islam inculcates, among other precepts, the following:*

- i. **Non-sectarianism:** Every individual who sincerely professes his or her acceptance of Islam by accepting the words: "La ilaha ill Ilaha, Muhammad-ur rasul-ul Allah" — is a Muslim. No one, nor any body of Muslims, has the right to make personal inquisitions into anyone's beliefs and dispense with him out of Islam. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam. Fatwas declaring Muslims *kafir* is an utmost insult to the integrity of Islam — the Islam that Allaah via the Holy Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h.] instituted.
- ii. **Rationalism:** In all matters of religion, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. *Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted*.
- iii. **Universality:** It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally justly --- irrespective of race, nationality, or religion.
- iv. **Peacefulness:** It allows the use of force only in unavoidable self-defense. The concept of Jihad has been erroneously misrepresented by the 'Ulema. ISLAM teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule that accords them freedom of religion. All battles of early Islam were purely defensive. The impression that Islam urges its followers to wage war or rebellion to establish its rule is entirely wrong. The concept of Jihad is greatly misunderstood: it primarily signifies a spiritual, intellectual and moral struggle to reform oneself and others.
- v. **Tolerance:** It gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practice any creed or religion. It requires us to tolerate (*but not compromise with*) the differences of beliefs and opinions, and underscores the *Qur'anic* injunction:

**"THERE IS -- ABSOLUTELY -- NO COMPULSION IN RELIGION."**

*From its very inception, Ahmadi-Muslims have been propagating a Living, Liberal, Loving, and Tolerant Islam; and a God Who speaks now as He did in the past.* Differences of belief and interpretation, with whomsoever these may occur, must be tolerated.

Criticism against Islam must be answered only by word, and any offence felt must be borne with patience; responding by physical violence is alien to the teachings of Islam. The common image of Islam as an intolerant faith is completely *false*.

- vi. A living Faith:** Acts of worship are not rituals to be performed without thought or feeling. They are meant to put the human soul in living contact with a Living God. We must know the purpose of prayer, fasting, etc, and carry them out in their true spirit. God listens to man's supplications and answers his prayers. In every age there arise, among Muslims, saints who have closeness to, and communication with God. Their example shows others that there is a Living God Who speaks to man.
- vii. Supportive of Women:** A great deal of misunderstanding prevails on this point, mainly due to local customs being confused with the teachings of Islam. According to Islam, a woman is a full, responsible human being, just as a man is. She should have the same control over determining the course of her life (including matters of marriage and divorce) as a man has over his life.
- viii. Highly Moral:** It requires Muslims to develop the highest personal moral virtues, and display these qualities even at the cost of personal or national interest. An Islamic society is not created by imposing laws and regulations on people. It is only created by reforming the character of individuals through moral training and example, and this was what the Holy Prophet Muhammad did.
- ix. Heart-Winning:** It seeks to conquer hearts and minds by showing the logic, truth and beauty of its teachings, in a gentle, loving spirit. It condemns force or coercion to spread the faith or make people conform to it.
- x. Complete:** The Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) provide complete and perfect guidance for all mankind, for all time to come. The Holy Prophet is the perfect exemplar of the highest moral virtues: that is why he is the Last of the Prophets (Khatam-un Nabiyyin). After him, no Prophet (new or old) is to arise. However, Mujjaddids (Reformers) will be raised by God to revive & rekindle the light of the faith of Islam.
- xi. Finality of Prophethood:** Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad FIRMLY believed, and FORTHRIGHTLY advocated that the Holy Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h.] is the ABSOLUTE LAST Prophet. No New nor Old Prophet will come after him - Our Holy Prophet Muhammad [p.b.u.h.].

**“I [Hazrat MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD] firmly believe that our Holy Prophet MUHAMMAD is the LAST**

**of the Prophets,  
AND**

**AFTER him,  
NO**

**Prophet shall come for this nation, neither  
Old nor New.”** (Nishan Asmani, p. 28).

## **SOME OF OUR PUBLICATIONS**

**World-renowned literature published by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, (Lahore) U.S.A.**

*"Probably no man living has done longer or more valuable service for the cause of Islamic revival than Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore. His literary works, with those of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, have given fame and distinction to the Ahmadiyya Movement."* — Marmaduke Pickthall.

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